



# Trackers Earth

## Packing List - Overnight Summer Camp

When packing for Trackers, follow these Guidelines:

- ⇒ First off, put you or your child's FULL NAME on as many items as possible.
  - ⇒ Pack as lightly as you can! BUT include the right gear needed for the day (see below).
  - ⇒ Keep it light and tight! Everything should fit into a single pack—nothing clipped on the outside.
  - ⇒ Choose wisely! Check out "How-To: Trackers Kit" below for help assembling gear.
  - ⇒ Be ready! Check the weather report every morning to guide you in what to pack.
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Pack as lightly as possible, but include the right gear to stay protected and safe. All packed items should fit into a single pack (nothing clipped or tied onto outside). We provide all tents for Trackers overnight programs.

### *Carry System (Backpack)*

The smaller bag should fit into the larger bag.

- Duffle Bag or Backpack** Try to pack it all in ONE pack! Capable of fitting clothes and ALL gear. Large duffles are cost effective and work great.
- Small Day Pack** - For carrying water bottles and day gear.

### *Shelter System (Sleeping Gear)*

Make a good investment. How you sleep at night affects mood and learning capacity during the day.

- Sleeping Pad** Does not need to be fancy, but no inflatable pool mattresses.
- Sleeping Bag** Cold weather mummy bag, if possible. A quality bag rated at 10°-30° is essential. No cotton or flannel-lined sleeping bags.

### *Water & Food System*

- Water Bottle** 1 Liter or more. Non-leaking. Clearly labeled with name. Fill with water. We refill later.
- Mess Kit** Bowl, fork, spoon, cup. Metal or wood are preferred.

- Lunch + Morning/Afternoon Snack** Must not require refrigeration. Trash free is ideal. Container must fit within backpack. A lunch is only needed for the first day at check in.

#### *Clothing System - Critical for High Quality*

Focus your investment on this clothing for overall comfort and safety. For cooler days these are essential. Many items, especially raingear and boots, can be purchased cost-effectively secondhand.

- Base Layer (aka Thermal Underwear)** Merino wool.
- Merino Wool Socks - 3 Pairs** One pair on feet. One pair in bag. Must fit well to prevent blisters.
- Waterproof Coat and Pants** Heavy-duty rain gear that covers the entire body. Not a light poncho. See Water RESISTANT vs WaterPROOF description below.
- Waterproof Hiking Boots** Waterproof and good fit.

#### *Clothing System - Useful for High Quality*

- Rugged pants**, Wool, good synthetic, or heavy-duty canvas.
- Light Shoes or Rafting Sandals** Easy to wear around camp
- Warm Insulating Coat** Wool or good synthetic.
- Warm Stocking Hat** Wool or good synthetic.
- Gloves** Thin enough to perform tasks while wearing them.
- Shorts**
- Swimsuit** Used during camouflage exercises or showering. Shorts can work as swimsuit bottoms.
- Change of "Normal" Dry Clothes** If your "outdoor" outfit gets wet.

#### *Hygiene System - Toiletries*

- Tooth Care** Toothbrush, toothpaste, floss (the most important thing EVER!!!).
- Personal medications (prescription AND non-prescription)** Check in with our staff at drop-off. Please have them out and ready to check-in.
- Sunscreen** SPF 15 or higher clearly labeled with the child's name. Apply before check-in.
- Hand Sanitizer** Make sure it does not leak. Consider putting in a ziplock baggie.
- OPTIONAL Insect repellent** Cannot be applied inside tents.
- Feminine hygiene products** if necessary

#### *Tool System*

- Pencil + Eraser** For Trackers Journal.
- Pocket Tape Measure** Small and compact for measuring tracks and plants.
- Illumination** Headlamp or flashlight with charged batteries.

- ESSENTIAL Safety Whistle** On person at all times.
- OPTIONAL - Woodcarving Knife & Tools** We also have knives to use. We follow strict woodcarving protocols. If a Tracker brings their own knife, ensure they keep it in a safe place (backpack) until carving time designated by their instructor.
- Optional - Trackers Stick** Harvest this before coming to camp. A staff for walking and other adventures. Sustainably harvest at home—never cut without permission. Standing, your stick is two hands higher than your elbow. Find wood that is straight, so it rolls on the floor with few bumps. Light enough for walking with, but sturdy enough to lean your knee into it without breaking. Carve, woodburn, or write FULL NAME on it with permanent marker.

### **DO NOT bring**

Candy and gum, soft drinks, sports drinks, pets or animals, toys, body spray/cologne/perfume, hatchets/axes, money, weapons, non-archery personal sports equipment, expensive/sentimental items, phones or electronics. Do not bring Drugs/Alcohol/Tobacco as bringing any of these items will result in immediate expulsion from camp.

### **Electronic Device Policy**

#### **NO CELL PHONES: Unplug from Technology, Reconnect with Nature**

At Trackers we believe it's critical for kids to experience nature and community without being distracted by phones. Games and Social Media are designed to capture kids' attention and keep them hooked. We are teaching kids how to Pay Attention and we want them to get hooked on the plants and animals around them. Searching online gives kids instant gratification. At Trackers we want them to stick with skills, even when they are challenging. They're here to develop resilience and grit.

To accomplish these goals, we need Trackers (our students) to leave their phones and other internet and gaming devices at home while participating in our programs. Trackers staff follow similar rules. During program time they only use phones for operational purposes (maps, emergency calls, etc), not for entertainment.

At Trackers, *leave the phone at home* to better appreciate nature! You can blame it on us! We recommend stopping your child's cell phone and internet use 2 days (or more) before the start of their Trackers program. Any phones or devices brought to a Trackers camp or class will be collected at the beginning of the program, stored safely, and returned to the owner at the end of the program. Thank you for your understanding and compliance. Your child will have a much richer experience because of your support.

**Trackers Tip** Every morning, check the weather report. If there is even a minor chance of rain, pack a raincoat and rain pants, as well as waterproof shoes.

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# Your Trackers Kit!

A Trackers Kit, which includes clothing and gear, gets you ready for the outdoors. Staying warm and dry and hydrated are key ingredients of survival. Assembling a Trackers Kit *with your child* is critical, and your child's first outdoor skills lesson. You can print this illustration of a Trackers Kit and share it with your kids.

## TRACKERS RELICS: KIT

A Trackers Kit identifies you as a Tracker and prepares you for Survival.

A Tracker is organized. Keep your kit tidy. Know where everything is. Use gearlines.

A Trackers Kit has:

- Insulation
- Armor
- Gear
- Band

Journal all adventures. Keep the Journal safe.

Gearlines keep your Team and Kit neat.

Choose earth tones for Stealth & Counter Tracking.

Your backpack keeps gear safe and organized.

Check weather before you dress, but pack insulation and armor for weather surprises.

### YOUR CLIMATE KIT

#### HOT

insulation    armor



INSULATION  
Repels heat or keeps it in.  
Materials: wool stays warm when wet, light colors reflect hot sun.

ARMOR  
Protects from wind, rain and sun.  
Materials: water-proof, not water resistant.

#### COLD

insulation    armor



## Clothing

In outdoor wilderness survival, clothing is the shelter you wear. The right clothing allows you to go almost anywhere in any weather. We divide clothing into 2 categories: Insulation & Armor.

## Insulation (base & mid-layer)

Insulation keeps heat in. Insulation includes the base layers and mid-layers of clothing. A Tracker uses several thin layers of insulation, so they can remove or add items as the temperature changes. Base layers include long underwear and socks. Mid-layers include a warm coat and pants.

## Armor (outer layer)

Armor protects from wet, wind, and sun. Armor includes your outermost layer of clothing. For wet weather, Armor keeps your Insulation layers dry. Staying dry is important because when you're wet, you cool down much more quickly. Armor includes a waterproof coat, pants, and boots. For hot and sunny weather, your Armor keeps UV rays away from your skin. Armor includes a sunhat, sun shirt, and sunscreen (applied throughout the day)!

## Materials

Not all materials are created equal. Consider what your layers are made of when assembling Insulation and Armor.

**Cotton** clothes should be avoided in cold, wet weather. It dries slowly and holds moisture against your skin rather than wicking it away. In hot weather, cotton's cooling effect can be valuable.

**Wool** does not absorb moisture as quickly as cotton and is better insulation when wet. We highly recommend *merino wool* for the base layer of your Insulation. *Merino* wool is soft and less itchy. Because it wicks moisture away from your skin, it's also *antibacterial*. Kids won't smell (as bad) after days of wearing unwashed merino wool!

**Synthetics** come in many types—nylon, pile, and more—which are useful for different reasons. Some are insulating, while others are waterproof. Synthetic fleece can be warm and often dries faster than other fabrics (even wool). But many synthetics are hazardous near a campfire, getting holes from every spark. Synthetics also lack antibacterial properties of wool, so they get smelly and must be cleaned more often.

### Trackers Tip

Since most synthetic fibers are not biodegradable, they stay in the environment forever. They may also be conditioned with different chemicals for waterproofing, etc. Today, many companies make synthetics from recycled materials and components that are better for our health and environment. Do your research to learn about the health and sustainability of different garments. Some synthetics are necessary for your Trackers Kit (especially waterproof layers), so care for your gear so it lasts a long time and doesn't end up in a landfill.

## **Water RESISTANT vs WaterPROOF**

Don't confuse water-resistant with waterproof! In wet weather, a Tracker needs *waterproof* jackets, pants, and boots. Some materials look like they will shed rain, but are only water-resistant, so the water eventually gets through and makes you cold. Check labels to confirm that your Armor layers are fully waterPROOF.

## **Trackers Tip**

Look for rain gear with a waterproof rating of 5000mm or more. 10,000mm is ideal.

## **Breathability (Don't Get Wet From Your Sweat)**

As you warm up, sweat evaporates from your body. If it gets trapped inside your clothes it can make you cold. *Breathable* waterproof clothing is made of special material or vented so water (rain, dew, etc.) can't get in, but water vapor (from sweat) can get out.

## **Earth Colors**

A Tracker trains to be stealthy and invisible in the woods. Bright colors stand out, while beige, brown, and forest green blend with nature. Wearing all black creates an unnatural outline not found in nature. Instead, wear shades of gray to blend with the shadows and dappled light of the forest. You don't need to wear camouflage, but choose colors to match the forest, fields, and places where you adventure.

# **Gear**

Gear includes a Tracker's backpack and *survival systems*. The gear you carry depends on your adventure. Will you be way out in the backcountry? Are you staying overnight? Your plans determine what you pack. We recommend assembling these basic *survival systems* and having them ready to carry in your backpack, based on your expected needs:

- **Food System** Could include snacks, staple foods, utensils, cookstove, fuel, and fishing tackle.
- **Water System** Always pack a water container. If water isn't potable, bring a filter or water treatment.
- **Clothes System** This includes the clothes on your body, plus extra clothes for if you get wet/dirty or weather changes.
- **Health System** Toothbrush, sunglasses/sunscreen where needed, other toiletries, medications, first aid kit.
- **Wayfinding System** Compass (ideal with declination marks), topographic/aerial map of the area, GPS (though consider power needs). Know true north vs magnetic north.
- **Camp Craft Tools** Knife, saw, and useful other tools.

## **Remember**

These are ideas for a Trackers Kit that will work for *all* occasions. For your Trackers program, follow the packing list **you receive with your reminder**. Also see the links at the end of this blog.

## Caretaking

It's critical to care for your Trackers Kit and keep what you carry in the best condition. Your survival could very easily depend on it. A Tracker is a caretaker, ensuring their clothing and gear lasts a lifetime. We encourage young Trackers to contribute funds toward the purchase of their own Trackers Kit. Often a higher level of caretaking comes with ownership and investment.

### Maintenance

Maintenance prevents waste, so learn to care for your clothing and gear. Store and carry gear in a way that limits damage. Know where your Kit is at all times. Follow washing instructions and do regular maintenance, applying necessary conditioner to shoes, clothing, etc. Check for damage after each use, and promptly repair or replace as needed.

#### **Trackers Tip**

When washing wool clothes, use delicate cycles, cold water, and no soap (or soap specifically for wool). Don't put wool in the dryer—always hang it out to dry to prevent shrinking.

#### **By Used, Barter Used (BUBU)**

A Tracker always practices sustainability. In modern society, we've developed a bad habit of throwing things away when they are still useful. That means it's easy to find used gear in great condition, which saves you money and is better for the planet. Even if you can afford to buy new clothes and gear, buy them used! Consider donating the money you save to groups that supply outdoor gear to youth who can't afford it.

#### **Repair It**

Don't throw away clothes and gear that are still useful. Learn to sew and repair your Kit. Don't toss out that sleeping bag with a hole—patch it! Glue those old leather boots for more years of hiking. As your skills improve, you will extend the life of your gear and even make your own items.

#### **Pay it Forward**

Young Trackers will outgrow items in their Kit—especially clothing. In the spirit of Caretaking, share what no longer fits with extended family and community members who can use it. Your gift will encourage others to spend time outdoors.

## Always Organize (AO!)

One of the best ways to take care of your gear is Always Organize! (AO!). Make sure there is a place for everything in your Trackers Kit and put everything in its place. AO is also a safety issue. In modern times, if you misplace or forget something in your Kit, you can buy a backup. In the wilderness, if you forget something in your Kit, you could die.

### **Gearlines**

Before heading out on an adventure, make a “gearline.” Neatly line up everything that will go in your Kit, including your pack, out where you can see it. Imagine what you will do during your adventure, and check to see that you have everything you need for those doings. Order your gearline based on how often you will use each item—used most often goes on top, used less often on the bottom. Based on your access plan, carefully place everything into your pack and its pockets. For example, if it’s sunny, your raincoat goes in the bottom and your water bottle and sunscreen go into side pockets for easy access. Your knife should always go in a safe, snug spot where it won’t fall out.

### **Trackers Tip**

Roll your clothes to save room in your pack and keep it organized. Check out [how Marie Kondo does it](#). Limit the gear you take to only what you need. Unnecessary extras add clutter and weight to your Kit.

### **Kit Check!**

Check your Kit frequently. When leaving an area, look around to make sure you left nothing behind! When you’re with your Trackers Team, call out “Kit Check” each time you arrive at or leave an area.